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584 pray until I get her who warms me in her broad sleeves; then I will pray; *mâni mṣalli lawla' ḥaṣṣ li ẓâfi ar-rdân ṣallejt.*"

LIMITATIONS ON THE CHOICE OF A WIFE

582 In the choice of a wife the Rwejli is considerably limited. He must not marry the divorced wife of his father nor her daughter, not even if she was begotten by another man. He is not allowed to marry the divorced wife of his son or his son's widow, the mother of his wife, the daughter of his brother or sister. Neither may he marry his foster sister. No member of the Eben Ša'lân kin will take to wife a daughter of the Ḥwêṭât or Beni 'Aṭijje tribes nor allow his daughters to marry any of them. Neither the Ḥwêṭât nor Beni 'Aṭijje are by birth equal to the Eben Ša'lân, because they paid, as late as the first half of the nineteenth century, a tax for protection, *ḫwa*, to the despised Šarârât tribe and camped with them as their *ḳuṣara*, or protected neighbors.

619 554 582 565 No Rwejli dares marry a member of the Ṣlejb, al-Ḥawâzem, al-Fhejǧât, Šarârât, or 'Âzem tribes. All these are also called Htejm. They have their chiefs and their social organization, they live in tents and breed camels just like the other Bedouins, and yet they are not held in esteem. The reason is that they pay a tax for protection, *ḫwa*; that they are neither able to protect themselves nor gain full independence. Being thus compelled to buy the protection of the more vigorous tribes, they are not allowed to enter into blood relationship with their protectors. They are *ḫwân*, they pay *ḫwa* — and their sons will pay too. Their countenance, or honor, is as white as that of the Rwala, but they are not held in the same esteem. They do not live with the Bedouins as strangers, but as neighbors, *ḳuṣara*. If they serve them, they serve them as *fedawijje*, free servants, which is not considered a disgrace because members of large Bedouin tribes also hire themselves as *fedawijje* to the more powerful chiefs.

582 326 A Rwejli cannot marry the daughter of a blacksmith, *ṣâne'* (pl., *ṣunnâ'*) or other mechanic who camps with the Rwala or lives in their settlements. It is said of the *ṣunnâ'*, that they are no *aṣîlin* — that is, that they have no recognized genealogy — and even that nothing is known about their true descent, as they marry newcomers from various towns,

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settlements, and tribes regardless of whether they are autonomous, free, dependent, or slaves. 582 326

Marriages with slaves are also forbidden. A man marrying a slave would be killed by his kin, *ahl*. No one dares defile the blood of his kin. 582 567

Moreover there are inequalities even among the free Arab tribes. All those belonging to the ʿAneze group consider themselves aristocrats, hold the other tribes in contempt, and dislike forming matrimonial bonds with them. The children born of such wedlock often hear these ironical remarks: 619 554 582 565

"Thou wilt come to nothing, for thou art only half a Rwejli; blood will not mix well with blood; thou wilt resemble thy mother's kin," etc.

Rights of the Eben al-ʿAmm

The children of parents descended from the respectable old ʿAneze families are the best. Yet even here the bridegroom is not entirely free in choosing a wife, for according to the ancient custom every girl is to wed the nearest young relative whom it is permissible to marry, *eben al-ʿamm*. This is, generally, a son of her father's cousin; should this cousin have no sons or if the grandfather had no brothers, the girl falls to the nearest kinsman descended from the great-grandfather's brother. The *eben al-ʿamm* occasionally claims the girl, *jeḥağğerha*, exclusively for himself, but, even if he does not, the girl cannot marry without his consent, for it is said: "No one but the nearest kinsman can tie or untie her, *ʿoḳdha w-ḥallha bjad eben ʿammiha* (sic!)." Only when her father wants to marry again and gives her in exchange for his new wife, *jebaddelha lnafseh*, is the *eben al-ʿamm*'s claim null and void. On the other hand, if the girl refuses to be wedded to her *eben al-ʿamm*, he may kill her without becoming liable for compensation. 582

If the *eben al-ʿamm* knows that the girl will not hear of him, being already in love with someone else, he forbids the marriage and the girl grows old.

If the father of the girl claimed by her *eben al-ʿamm* dies and the girl loves another, she goes immediately after the father's death to the relative who claims her exclusively for himself, called in this case *ḥaǧǧir*, and asks: "My father has passed away; I want thee to release my neck; I want thee 582 584